

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A photomask designing method used in a lithography process, the lithography process comprising illuminating light on a photomask and converging  
5 the light which has passed through the photomask on a photosensitive substrate via a projection optical system, the photomask designing method comprising:

acquiring a transmittance characteristic of the projection optical system, the characteristic varying  
10 depending on a difference in optical paths of light in the projection optical system, the light passing through the projection optical system, and

acquiring mask bias of the photomask by use of the transmittance characteristic of the projection optical  
15 system.

2. The designing method according to claim 1, wherein the acquiring the transmittance characteristic of the projection optical system comprises acquiring  
20 a transmission factor of the projection optical system for diffraction light which is generated on the photomask and passes through the projection optical system.

3. The designing method according to claim 1, wherein the photomask comprises a plurality of patterns  
25 having different shapes respectively and the acquiring the mask bias of the photomask comprises acquiring a plurality of mask biases for the plurality of patterns.

4. The designing method according to claim 2,  
wherein the photomask comprises a plurality of patterns  
having different shapes respectively and the acquiring  
the mask bias of the photomask comprises acquiring a  
5 plurality of mask biases for the plurality of patterns.

5. The designing method according to claim 1,  
wherein the acquiring the transmittance characteristic  
of the projection optical system comprises acquiring  
transmission factors of the projection optical system  
10 for diffraction lights which are generated on a  
plurality of regions of the photomask and the acquiring  
the mask bias of the photomask comprises respectively  
acquiring mask biases for the plurality of regions of  
the photomask.

15 6. The designing method according to claim 1,  
wherein the acquiring the transmittance characteristic  
of the projection optical system comprises acquiring  
transmission factors of the projection optical system  
for diffraction lights which are generated on a  
20 plurality of regions of the photomask and the acquiring  
the mask bias of the photomask comprises acquiring  
common mask bias for the plurality of regions of the  
photomask.

7. A pattern predicting method for predicting  
25 a pattern to be formed on a photosensitive substrate,  
the pattern being formed by illuminating light on  
a photomask and converging the light which has passed

through the photomask on the photosensitive substrate via a projection optical system, the pattern predicting method comprising:

5 approximating a transmission factor variation of the projection optical system by use of an orthogonal polynomial defined by pupil coordinates of the projection optical system, the transmission factor varying depending on a difference in optical paths of light in the projection optical system, the light  
10 passing through the projection optical system, and

predicting the pattern based on expansion coefficients of the orthogonal polynomial, the expansion coefficients approximating the transmission factor variation of the projection optical system.

15 8. The pattern predicting method according to claim 7, wherein the orthogonal polynomial is a Zernike polynomial.

9. The pattern predicting method according to claim 7, wherein the photosensitive substrate is a  
20 substrate on which a resist is coated and the pattern is an optical image of a pattern of the photomask projected on the resist or a resist pattern obtained by developing a resist on which an optical image of a pattern of the photomask is projected.

25 10. The pattern predicting method according to claim 8, wherein the photosensitive substrate is a substrate on which a resist is coated and the pattern

is an optical image of a pattern of the photomask projected on the resist or a resist pattern obtained by developing a resist on which an optical image of a pattern of the photomask is projected.

5           11. A photomask designing method used in a lithography process, the lithography process comprising illuminating light on a photomask and converging the light which passes through the photomask on a photosensitive substrate via a projection optical system, the photomask designing method comprising:

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          approximating a transmission factor variation of the projection optical system by use of an orthogonal polynomial defined by pupil coordinates of the projection optical system, the transmission factor

15           varing depending on a difference in optical paths of light in the projection optical system, the light passing through the projection optical system,

          predicting a pattern formed by converging the light having passed through the photomask on the

20           photosensitive substrate via the projection optical system based on expansion coefficients of the orthogonal polynomial, the expansion coefficients approximating the transmission factor variation of the projection optical system,

25           determining whether a difference between the predicted pattern and a designed pattern corresponding to the photomask lies within a predetermined range or

not, and

correcting the photomask to set the difference  
between the predicted pattern and the designed pattern  
into the predetermined range when the difference does  
5 not lie within the preset range.

12. The designing method according to claim 11,  
wherein the orthogonal polynomial is a Zernike  
polynomial.

13. The designing method according to claim 11,  
10 wherein the photosensitive substrate is a substrate on  
which a resist is coated and the pattern is an optical  
image of a pattern of the photomask projected on the  
resist or a resist pattern obtained by developing  
a resist on which an optical image of a pattern of  
15 the photomask is projected.

14. The designing method according to claim 12,  
wherein the photosensitive substrate is a substrate on  
which a resist is coated and the pattern is an optical  
image of a pattern of the photomask projected on the  
20 resist or a resist pattern obtained by developing  
a resist on which an optical image of a pattern of  
the photomask is projected.

15. A computer program product configured to store  
program instructions for execution on a computer system  
25 enabling the computer system to perform a process for  
predicting a pattern to be formed on a photosensitive  
substrate, the pattern being formed by illuminating

light on a photomask and converging the light which has passed through the photomask on the photosensitive substrate via a projection optical system, wherein the predicting the pattern comprising:

5           approximating a transmission factor variation of the projection optical system by use of an orthogonal polynomial defined by pupil coordinates of the projection optical system, the transmission factor variation varying depending on a difference in optical  
10          paths of light in the projection optical system, the light passing through the projection optical system;  
            and

            predicting the pattern based on expansion coefficients of the orthogonal polynomial, the  
15          expansion coefficients approximating the transmission factor variation of the projection optical system.

16. The computer program product according to claim 15, wherein the orthogonal polynomial is a Zernike polynomial.

20          17. The computer program product according to claim 15, wherein the photosensitive substrate is a substrate on which a resist is coated and the pattern is a resist pattern obtained by developing a resist on which an optical image of a pattern of the photomask  
25          is projected or an optical image of a pattern of the photomask projected on the resist.

18. A computer program product configured to store

program instructions for execution on a computer system enabling the computer system to perform a process for designing a photomask used for a lithography process, the lithography process including illuminating light on the photomask and converging the light having passed through the photomask via the projection optical system, wherein the designing the photomask comprising:

5 approximating a transmission factor variation of the projection optical system by pupil coordinates of the projection optical system, the transmission factor  
10 varying depending on a difference in optical paths of light in the projection optical system, the light passing through the projection optical system,

predicting a pattern formed by converging the  
15 light having passed through the photomask on the photosensitive substrate via the projection optical system based on expansion coefficients of the orthogonal polynomial, the expansion coefficients approximating the transmission factor variation of  
20 the projection optical system,

determining whether a difference between the predicted pattern and a designed pattern corresponding to the photomask lies within a predetermined range or not, and

25 correcting the photomask to set the difference between the predicted pattern and the designed pattern into the predetermined range when the difference does

not lie within the preset range.

19. The computer program product according to claim 18, wherein the orthogonal polynomial is a Zernike polynomial.

5        20. The computer program product according to claim 18, wherein the photosensitive substrate is a substrate on which a resist is coated and the pattern is an optical image of a pattern of the photomask projected on the resist or a resist pattern obtained  
10 by developing a resist on which an optical image of a pattern of the photomask is projected.